

US Army Chaplain Center and School
Fort Hamilton, New York

THE CHAPLAIN'S ROLE IN CIVIL
EMERGENCIES/DISTURBANCES

CH (MAJ) Harry P. Kissinger
(C-22, Class 74-1)
3 December 1973
Course B-19



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
I. RELIGIOUS COVERAGE	2
II. MISSION OF THE TROOPS	3
III. MOTIVATION AND MORALE	3
IV. THE PHASES OF A DISASTER	4
V. NEED OF A PLAN	5
VI. VIEW OF THE CHAPLAIN'S ROLE	5
VII. THE CHAPLAIN DURING DEPLOYMENT	7
VIII. GENERAL GUIDELINE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHAPLAIN	8
IX. CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS	11
X. THE COORDINATION FACTOR EXPANDED	12
XI. GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION	14
CONCLUSION	16
BIBLIOGRAPHY	18

Introduction

A civil emergency exists! What does the chaplain do? The chaplain cannot afford to be lost in knowing his role when an emergency or disturbance arises in a community or some given area. He dare not wait until a crisis comes so as to profit by experience. It may then be far too late to adopt a plan or SOP. Yet when doing research on this particular subject, one could easily make the conclusion that such is the situation. A plan is lacking. There is no authoritative basis as to what a chaplain should do. All agree that he can be a pastor, but is there more? What are some other activities in which he can be a great benefit?

This research sets forth guidelines, policies and limitations which can be used when considering the chaplain's role in civil emergencies and disturbance operations. While these three areas are dealt with throughout this material, they are by no means exhausted.

I. Religious Coverage

In civil emergencies or civilian disturbances, troops may be committed for an extended period of time. Therefore, the chaplain must be concerned for adequate religious coverage which is basic to his mission. While it is a responsibility of the commander, religious coverage:

is carried out by the chaplain as he brings the ministrations of religion to personnel of the command. These ministrations embrace a multitude of activities which include formal worship services, ministration of the sacraments of communion and baptism, confessions and absolution, religious instruction, prayer groups, Bible and catechism study, Seder and other Jewish rites, marriage preparation, lay-leadership, participation, pastoral consultations, observance of special holy days of obligation and many other rites, ceremonies and services appropriate to the various religious groups of America.¹

These ministrations need not be performed by an Army chaplain, but may be conducted by civilian clergymen of the appropriate faith or denomination. It is essential that those conducting the service be able to do so in a language which is understood by the serviceman. Exceptions to this rule are that of the Catholic Mass and certain parts of the Jewish services.²

¹USACDC, Study No. USACDCCSSG 63-5, July 1973. p. 2-A.

²Ibid.

II. Mission of the Troops

The mission of his troops should always be paramount in the unit chaplain's planning for an effective ministry to his men. The mission of troops in disaster relief is to provide emergency assistance in relief of civilians, and in the restoration of essential public activities and facilities. Overruling demands of humanity compel immediate action to prevent or alleviate extreme human suffering and starvation. Military necessity compels the military forces to help restore the civilian economy disrupted by disaster³

Military forces may be assigned the mission to establish and to operate relief centers.⁴ Not only can the chaplain visit his troops and civilian personnel, but he can be a helpful observer in making worthy recommendations to his commander or other authorities. He further can give comfort, encouragement and counseling as appropriate.

The Department of the Army has plans for the support of civil defense reaching down through USCONARC to the CONUS armies. A CONUS Army civil defense plan is broken down into plans for each metropolitan complex or area. In an emergency, religious services, especially ministrations to the injured, dying, bereaved, and emotionally disturbed person will be required on an unprecedented scale.⁵

III. Motivation and Morale

Belongingness and identification support the soldier! "Psychologists tell us that the greatest motivation for a soldier to fight in combat is to uphold his right to remain a member of his unit -- squad, platoon or company. He does not want to appear a coward or shirker before his buddies. Further, a soldier wants to demonstrate to other members of the unit that he assists them, and therefore deserves their assistance

³USACHS, Instructor Pamphlet: Chaplains and Chaplain Enlisted Assistants Supplemental Branch Training at 1972, p. 53.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 54.

in return." ⁶ In civil disturbance there must be time for the chaplain to motivate the members of the unit to team work, because the local situation of disturbance may induce the soldier to sympathize in unlawful disorder. Themes as "commitment" and "involvement" to unit integrity may very well be a major contribution to a successful mission. "Basic to motivation is the consideration that a person, military or civilian, acts or reacts according to his needs." ⁷ The chaplain's role in relating to the motivation cannot be minimized, and he needs to search out opportunities to be influential in this area. A. A. Maslow has ranked the fundamental sets of needs in order of importance and called them the "hierarchy of needs." They are five: (1) physiological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) need for belongingness and love, (4) need for esteem, (5) need for self-actualization.⁸

IV. The Phases of a Disaster

1. The pre-disaster period.
2. The period of detection and communication of warnings of a specific threat (absent in sudden disasters).
3. The period of immediate, unorganized response (very important phase in sudden disasters, but less so in the gradual or long-term impacts).
4. The period of organized social response (may cover days or

⁶USACDC, ACN 13313: The Chaplain's Role as Related to Soldier Motivation, April 1972, p. 22.

⁷Ibid., p. 21.

⁸Ibid.

weeks or may require years of relief and rehabilitation in heavy impacts).

5. The long-run post-disaster equilibrium; i.e., when the system has completed such reconstruction as it can achieve and has incorporated the "permanent" effects of the disaster.⁹

V. Need of a Plan

A plan will not guarantee that a disaster will not develop because emergency situations, especially those resulting from natural phenomena, usually cannot be prevented. However, actions taken to cope with an emergency situation as it begins to develop may prevent a disaster from developing into a tragedy. A disaster plan should provide the basis for orderly actions and decisions so loss is minimized.¹⁰

Civil defense missions that Army chaplains may perform include:

1. Pre-attack plans; provide input on religious facilities, personnel, ecclesiastical supplies into appropriate plans and orders.
2. Pre-attack training; provide appropriate training for both military or civilian clergymen on coordinated planning, organizational structure and religious coverage at task levels, use of religious facilities and ecclesiastical supplies, hospital ministry, ministrations to mass casualties, conduct of mass burials and religious services.
3. Post-attack operations; provide religious services, rites, sacraments, minister to mass casualties, coordinate and supervise use of religious facilities and clergy personnel.¹¹

VI. View of the Chaplain's Role

The chaplain's role or service is seen as follows:

1. Pastoral Care.-- Primary importance is that of religious rites,

⁹Allen H. Barton, Communities in Disaster (Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1969), p. 49.

¹⁰Richard J. Healy, Emergency and Disaster Planning (New York: John Wiley and Son, Inc., 1969), p. 1.

¹¹USACHS, Instructor Pamphlet, p. 54.

sacraments, and worship services for unit's military personnel and their dependents. The type of service to be conducted will be determined by the exigencies of the situation. The need will most be for numerous small worship services in different locations. The chaplain should always maintain flexibility for his scheduling of the unexpected. One should not think only in terms of Sunday services. A good time for a service may be when personnel are on alert status and restricted to a particular area.

2. Pastoral Counseling.-- Since many personal problems will occur during a civil disturbance, initiative must be exerted by the chaplain. The soldier's problems will center around his home situation, his conscience, or that target area may be his own home locale.

3. Service to Civilians.-- Religious services provided for civilians should be restricted to emergency ministrations. Prior approval is necessary from the commander in routine matters, as by an SOP.

4. Locations of Chaplain.-- Procedures may dictate that the chaplain set up his location near the military medical facility so that his response to emergencies will be immediate. Detailed procedures relating to the Army Casualty System are contained in AR 600-10.

5. Public Relations.-- The degree the chaplain acts in this area depends upon the direction of the commander. This area proves vital for indicating to the commander the favorable and unfavorable attitudes existing in the community as personified by local clergymen.

6. Emergency Relief.-- Various agencies which would play operational or support roles are those churches affiliated or sponsored as The Salvation Army, Goodwill Industries, and Catholic Charities. Having

coordinated with his commander for approval, the chaplain may find participation with these agencies very rewarding.

7. Human Relations Considerations.-- Often by his knowledge, the chaplain can help head off any difficulties which may be building up among members of his unit. You as chaplain, by effective communication, can become an important link in communicating between the young soldier and the NCO, the black and white soldier, and the younger and more senior officer.¹²

VII. The Chaplain During Deployment

1. Conduct religious survey of the area.
2. Accumulate religious information, but take care not to jeopardize the rights of privileged communications.
3. Advise the commander on matters of morals, morale and religion, of both the command and civilian community, as they effect the accomplishment of the civil affairs mission.
4. Establish liaison with persons and groups who are positioned to furnish welfare supplies as food, medicine and etc.
5. When applicable, recommend the employment of local and military resources, equipment and supplies to support religious ministrations to civilian refugees, displaced persons, and local populations.
6. Keep liaison with missionaries and civilian clergy and prepare current lists of news and locations of places of worship, religious shrines, religious houses, mission stations, religious-sponsored schools, welfare

¹²Ibid., pp. 57-59.

institutions and hospitals, along with their personnel.

7. Liaison with supervisory chaplain and chaplains of other commands.

8. Insure that the restrictions on the use of religious buildings are being observed.¹³

9. "Encourage the earliest practicable resumption of indigenous religious worship and practice which are not inimical to the U.S. military effort or detrimental to the life or health of the practitioners and are in accordance with civil affairs' objectives for the area." ¹⁴

VIII. General Guideline Functions of the Chaplain

Noted in a study by the CDC that the functions and subordinate tasks of joint staff chaplains have been analyzed and grouped under what is called nine functional headings. These guidelines become a good SOP for any chaplain in relationship to civil emergencies/disturbances:

1. Advisory.

a. The commander and staff is advised on religion, morals, and morale in a given situation in the entire command as well as to the civilian community.

b. Provides advise on the religious aspects of civic action activities.

c. Advises subordinates and informs and coordinates with

¹³USACDC, "Doctrinal Positions of Chaplains in CA Units in the 1970-75 Time Frame," Study Project USACDCCHA 65-2, 1966, p. 15.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 16.

supervisory chaplains as to policies and procedures.

d. As requested, he provides technical and professional advice and assistance to subordinate component commanders.

2. Administrative.

a. Prepares command reports as required.

b. Prepares a command religious and Human Self-Development Program activities report.

c. Provides input for command replies to questions of a religious nature.

d. Prepares, as appropriate, service component reports and denominational reports.

3. Coordination/Liaison.

a. Maintains coordination and/or liaison with supervisory and subordinate chaplains, and with chaplains of the inter-services, including USAR/NGAR as necessary.

b. Maintains the same with civilian religious leaders, pastors, activities of civilian religious groups, and the non-religious groups to which the chaplain can relate or assist.

c. PIO may be advisable on religious public relations.

4. Supervision.

a. Exercise technical supervision over subordinate chaplains, advisory groups, and religious services or activities of the command.

b. Inspect chaplain activities in the command as directed or required.

5. Planning.

a. Prepare plans for religious activities as directed.

b. Prepare plans for area and denominational religious coverage including provision for Jewish personnel.

c. Prepare itineraries for visits by religious leaders, civilian and military.

d. Consider and plan for daily broadcasts which may be available.

6. Training.

a. Conduct chaplain conferences to include civilian religious leaders.

b. Prepare a chaplain newsletter.

c. Coordinate the chaplain training program with the civilian religious community.

7. Pastoral.

a. Ministers first to commanders and staff as well as to individual members of the command for religious services, rites, counseling, hospital visits, funerals and etc.

b. Conducts religious services for and addresses civilian groups.

c. Daily visits to his military units or others uncovered.

8. Logistical.

a. Establishes a policy on chaplain ecclesiastical equipment and supplies.

b. Makes chaplain fund assistance available in support of emergencies as may be related.

c. Receives and distributes relief goods and monies for charitable puposes.

d. Provides civilian pastors/religious leaders with ecclesiastical logistic support as directed or approved.

9. Other.

a. Escorts civilian and military religious VIP's.

b. Participates in civic action activities as they may relate to religious organizations.

c. Assist in charitable fund campaigns which will aid relief in religious and humanitarian needs.¹⁵

These activities mentioned above are carried out as they relate to religious functions, institutions, and individuals by the chaplain or religious teams.

IX. Civic Action Projects

In the assisting in the participation of local civilian activities and local religious groups, often chaplains are swamped by requests for assistance. This can, if chaplains are not careful, detract from the basic mission to the detriment of his own personnel. The demands placed upon chaplains are sometimes far in excess of one's capabilities to assist. Close liaison should be established with the G-5 in the coordination of the civic action program. Commanders should permit and encourage their men to attend services in the area.¹⁶ Areas of civic actions in which a chaplain can help are:

1. Clothing.-- Chaplains can assist or supervise the gathering of

¹⁵USACDC, Study Project USACDCCHA 66-1, May 1967, pp. 31-34.

¹⁶Ibid., p. E-6.

clothing either from military or civilian families. If needed, clothing can be cleaned and sized for shipment by sex. He can coordinate with local agencies for distribution. Church service organizations, as Church World Service, can make such distributions. Or the chaplain can coordinate with military units in the distribution.

2. Food distribution.-- Often units build up odd combinations of rations which as accumulated can be distributed by the chaplains to needy families or orphanages. This can be continued until normal distribution can be resumed by government agencies.

3. Religious supplies.-- At times chaplains can provide supplies for local ministers. Often supplies are not adequately given by religious groups as altar wines, wafers -- usually needed items.¹⁷

In community related activities, the chaplain may have the opportunity to play a vital part in psychological operations. By direct contact with local ministers knowledge can be gained as to participation in psychological operations. The chaplain can act as advisor to the command in the role of religion in such operations. Background information can be provided on the influence of religion in the local culture. Leaflet distribution can prove very positive using religious themes in encouraging obedience to established laws and loyalty to governing officials.¹⁸

X. The Coordination Factor Expanded

The importance of the religious relations function in the successful accomplishment of the tactical and administrative mission, the

¹⁷Ibid., p. C-22.

¹⁸Ibid., p. E-9.

attainment of U.S. political objectives and the commander's legal and moral obligations toward civilians imposes the necessity for the most careful coordination with other staff sections, commands and agencies, as well as civilian agencies.¹⁹

1. G-1, Personnel.-- The chaplain needs to know the personnel of his unit in order to advise which individuals with what particular religious beliefs could be best recommended for certain assignments in a given area.

2. G-2, Intelligence.-- It is necessary to obtain information concerning religious attitudes of the people, its religious leaders, subversive elements posing as religious groups, and clandestine religious organizations.

3. G-3, Operations.-- One could consider maps needed, classes for Human Self-Development, religious training programs, briefings, and etc.

4. Archives.-- These can be used for church records, relics and historical property.

5. Civil Information.-- Public relations that are concerned with religious activities can be contacted.

6. Civilian Supply.-- Supplies may be needed for religious ceremonies, dietary, etc.

7. Displaced Persons.-- Religious census, activities, welfare and religious coverage should be considered.

8. Labor.-- The chaplain need be concerned for religious observances which may forbid some persons from working on certain days.

¹⁹USACDC, Study Project USACDCCHA 65-2, January 1966, p. C-22.

9. Others.-- Some final areas that may need attention are legal, property control, public education, public finance, public health, public safety and public welfare.²⁰

XI. Guideline Questions for Consideration

We need to question what we want to do. Here are some evaluations of our ministering in a crisis:

1. Is what we are attempting to do solve a local need, and be within their capability to assimilate? If they were unaided, could they themselves accomplish their desired end?

2. Is what we are attempting to do going to compromise the civilian authority's position and responsibility?

3. Is what we are attempting to do really going to aid the mission or jeopardize it? Is it in keeping with U.S. national policy?

4. Is what we are attempting to do a needless duplication of effort? Needless duplication needs to be constantly avoided.

5. Is what we are attempting to do going to support, or be a supplement or possibly a substitute for services normally rendered by other agencies?

6. Is what we are attempting to do going to assist the local economy to utilize resources at hand, patronize local merchants and enlist cooperation of the community?

The chaplains, when engaged in assisting outside of their regular role as ministers to the religious needs of the military personnel, will

²⁰Ibid., pp. C-22 and C-23.

be conscious of wearing two hats. However, under emergency situations they will be found apt to render assistance and adequately to represent their military branch of service. He must remain unbiased in matters of religious affairs. The American tradition of "freedom of religion" must be adhered to in the thinking, planning and operations of religious relations.²¹

²¹Ibid., pp. C-29, C-34, and C-35.

Conclusion

Presently as to the Civil Affairs School at Fort Bragg, there is no written plan presented in regards to the chaplain's role in civil emergencies/disturbance operations. Although there are twenty teams in the civil concept, no active Army branches or functional teams exist. The only continuity for such a program is with the reservists.²² Airborne divisions, as the 82nd and the 101st, do not possess any written SOP for the chaplain in CA operations.²³ National Guard senior chaplains are not able to provide, at present, any such plan. In recent years chaplains have ministered to their troops while they have been called up in civil disorders. Interviewing some of these chaplains, it is learned that they were able to calm fatigued, angry policemen. In visits made to local jails, chaplains reasoned with the authorities for more of a humanitarian treatment of civilian prisoners grouped in large numbers. In Detroit, when racial unrest was prevalent and could have been a problem within the unit as tensions mounted, the chaplain was able to give on the spot team counsel to groups of soldiers of both races. On the spot observant chaplains seeing serious crimes being carried out quickly notified nearby police. Chaplains have even attempted to resolve the problem of many

²²Telephonic interview with CH (LTC) Michael J. Rogers, Civil Affairs School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, September 1973.

²³Telephonic interview with CH (MAJ) Robert R. Saunders, 82nd Airborne Division, and CH (MAJ) George E. Ormsbee, 101st Airborne Division, October 1973.

females trying to penetrate, unlawfully, the military encampment. Most chaplains have indicated that the chaplain can be the greatest morale booster in troops in civil disturbances, and can relate best to them as to the morality aspect of their involvement.²⁴

The chaplain is a vital member of a team, but he must know his role well -- before a civil crisis erupts!

²⁴Interview with CH (MAJ) Robert Gushwa, Fort Hamilton, New York, October 1973.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Barton, Allen H. Communities in Disaster. Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1969.
- Healy, Richard J. Emergency and Disaster Planning. New York: John Wiley and Son, Inc., 1969.

Military Publications

- U.S. Army Chaplain School, Instructor Pamphlet: Chaplains and Chaplain Enlisted Assistants Supplemental Branch Training at 1972, 1972.
- U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, ACN 13313: The Chaplain's Role as Related to Soldier Motivation, 1972.
- . Study No. USACDCCSSG 63-5, 1963.
- . "Doctrinal Positions of Chaplains in CA Units in the 1970-75 Time Frame," Study Project USACDCCHA 65-2, 1966.
- . Study Project USACDCCHA 66-1, 1967.

Personal Interviews

- Gushwa, CH (MAJ) Robert. US Army Chaplain School, Fort Hamilton, New York. Interview, October 1973.
- Ormsbee, CH (MAJ) George E. 101st Airborne Division. Telephonic interview, October 1973.
- Rogers, CH (LTC) Michael J. Civil Affairs School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Telephonic interview, September 1973.
- Saunders, CH (MAJ) Robert R. 82nd Airborne Division. Telephonic interview, October, 1973.